

AMENDMENT TO THE DRAWINGS

Figs. 1, 3, 4 and 7 have been amended. The attached sheets of formal drawings replace the original sheets including Figs. 1, 3, 4 and 7. At the right-hand side of each figure, referring to the treating tank 22 (page 9, lines 9-11), the incorrect reference "20" is being replaced with - - 22 - - to conform the drawings to the specification.

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

The Examiner pointed out errors in Figs. 1, 3, 4 and 7 (replacement drawings filed April 6, 2007) which are being corrected herein.

Claim 13 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, on the ground that the relationship between the controller and the preheating of the back plate was not clearly stated in the claims. Without limiting the scope of the claim, claim 13 is being amended herein to state that “said [controller] heating device preheats said back plate” See paragraph [0057]. In view of this amendment, the §112 rejection is requested to be withdrawn.

The Examiner cited a new reference, Iseki et al., and rejected claims 13-16 over Kuroda et al. (U.S. ‘098) in view of Ueno et al. and Iseki et al.

U.S. ‘098 (Kuroda et al.) discloses that substrates are treated by setting a wafer guide (corresponding to the substrate holding device of the present claims) in a cleaning tank (corresponding to the treating tank of the present claims) before the treatment. This reference neither discloses nor suggests a heating device that preheats the back plate before immersing the substrates in the heated treating solution stored in the treating tank.

U.S. Patent No. 5,421,905 (Ueno et al.) describes only heating of support rods 43 of wafer fork 41 at the time of a cleaning and drying treatment. Again, this reference discloses or suggests nothing relating to the heating device that preheats the back plate before immersing the substrates in the heated treating solution stored in the treating tank.

The newly cited U.S. Patent 6,174,371 (Iseki et al.), discloses an apparatus for heating a substrate in an atmosphere including a vapor of a treating liquid. This apparatus does not treat substrates immersed in a treating solution as claimed herein. Thus, this reference is in a non-analogous art, solves different problems than those presented herein, and is accordingly inapplicable to the subject matter of claims 13-16. For this reason, the Iseki et al. patent should be withdrawn as a reference.

Even if combined, a combination of Kuroda et al. and Ueno et al., and even including Iseki et al., would not suggest the features of claims 13-16, since none of these references discloses or suggests the claimed heating device that preheats the back plate before immersing the substrates in the heated treating solution stored in the treating tank.

Thus, claim 13 in this application is not obvious from the references cited. Claims 14-16 in this application depend from claim 13, and are not obvious from the references for the same reason. Allowance is therefore requested.

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JAF:lf

Respectfully submitted,



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